

To Senators Colapietro and Witkos, Representatives Shapiro and Bacchiochi, and members of the General Law Committee, my name is Sean Daly, and I am providing written testimony on behalf of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. We represent over 6000 Ct. Residents who work in the electrical industry. We are in support of HB 5220 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENFORCEMENT OF CERTAIN PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING, CERTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION LAWS.

To provide some brief background, there was legislation enacted in 2007 which made a variety of changes to the occupational and professional licensing and certification laws. The IBEW worked with the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) on some aspects of that bill, as there were some provisions within the legislation that the IBEW could support. Having said that, one piece of the legislation which dealt with enforcement of occupational licensing laws bestowed authority in enforcing such laws to the DCP that was previously held in conjunction with the occupational licensing boards.

While it was not fully recognized at the time, it appears to the IBEW that an unintended consequence of this law has resulted in the Electrical Examining Board being void of all responsibility and influence when it comes to oversight of the electrical licensing laws. While the original intent of the 2007 legislation, as we understood, was to allow both the Commissioner and the Boards to administer disciplinary action upon finding violations of the occupational licensing laws, in the last 2 years the Board has not seen a single case come across its desk except for unregistered apprentice time. The Commissioner is not required to send cases to the Boards for action, opinions or before imposing or not imposing discipline. Consequently, the Boards are left in the dark and have become lame ducks when it comes to addressing or knowing how often individuals in the field are being found to violate licensing laws, and are also unaware when and if there is proper punishment. For an example a case filed by me against DC Electric to DCP was filed on Nov. 7th 2007 for work performed by this contractor @ Shelton High School. The certified payrolls showed 9 unlicensed or unregistered employees for weeks doing electrical work. Today is Jan. 5th 2009 and the case is still unresolved @ DCP and the board has not heard one word about it. Shelton High School recently a fire and part of the fire alarm system was inoperable, this work was done by the contractor mentioned. Thank God no one was injured.

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The IBEW feels this is most importantly an issue of life safety and quality. We do not feel confident at this time that occupational licensing laws are being enforced in the manner proposed by law. We feel that if the Examining Boards are included in the disciplinary process, we can feel confident offenders will receive suitable penalties, and therefore maintain the integrity and safety of the construction industry and hinder repeat offenses. Also the fines that are not being levied would help the state with our current budget crisis.

We have attached language we feel will address our concerns. We are willing to be active participants in ongoing discussion to craft language and resolve the issue.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Sean Daly